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VIEWS OF LOUISIANA.

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We are not well informed as to the progress of settlement westward during the last year, but we know that the emigration thither has been lately much greater than it ever was before, since the first colonization of our continent; and that a great part of it—perhaps much the greatest part, has been directed to that country which this book describes; that is, to the immense regions formerly denominated the Territory of Louisiana, including the present State of Louisiana and Territory of Missouri.

Those countries, naturally so interesting on account of the infinite varieties they present in soil, landscape, climate, and productions, and important for the fertility of many portions, and facilities of communication that most of them enjoy, have a new adventitious claim to attention, and a political consequence, from a concurrence of some of those changeable causes that determine the fate of nations.

While the extension of our territory has been a subject of general felicitation, there are some "dreamers of dreams," who, unable to calculate, must prophecy; and fear possible, dangerous changes to arise from it which not even they themselves can distinctly imagine. There are even some of your sober, plodding politicians alarmed for the effect of every new impulse given to public sentiment; men like the hypochondriac who thought himself made of glass; still heartless under the late panic caused by the horrible brood which unprincipled innovation cast upon the world. The perfection of a system, with such people, is the quietness of its operation, and the highest effort of their wisdom, patriotism and courage, is to endeavor to keep things stationary by opposing the current of the world's perpetual and inevitable changes. Be it so—there can be no change of condition for us so great as that of sinking into a state of tranquility and circumscribed expectation. Our present habits, like our primeval ones, are migratory and adventurous; and hence arise the ardour, courage, perseverance, fertility in resources, and versatility of skill—and, above all, the spirit of liberty and independence which characterize the nation. Our political institutions have grown up under the influence of those dispositions of the public mind, and are suited only to such. We have little to apprehend while our people have room to wander and speculate: our greatest danger must arise from that re-

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finement—that effeminacy of civilization, which the fanciful, chemical French politician said was the result of the fermenting and clarifying processes caused by the compactness of population.

We are therefore not only pleased at the magnitude of the changeable prospect which the present condition of the country presents, but consider it an important duty incumbent on us to use every effort in our humble power, to cast light upon the path of that multitude of random sojourners that are forsaking our cheerless sea-board—flying from the scenes of stagnant commerce and starving manufactures. As Mr. Brackenridge's "Views of Louisiana" is incomparably the best geographical and topographical account of that country which has yet been published, we can do nothing better, at present, than refer such of our readers as may be interested on the subject, to that comprehensive and interesting little volume.

The first fifty pages of the work are occupied by the history of settlement, including the history and explanation of the Spanish territorial claims; but as it is, of course, multifarious and very much condensed, it would be impossible, within our limits, to give even a tolerable sketch of it; but of the topographical descriptions which follow we can avail ourselves with more ease and propriety. The fourth chapter commences with the following delineation of the general appearance of the country:

"This extensive portion of North America has usually been described from the inconsiderable part which is occupied by the settlements, as though it were confined to the immediate borders of the Mississippi, as Egypt is to those of the Nile. By some, it is represented in general description, as a low, flat region, abounding in swamps and subject to inundation; which is the same thing as if the Netherlands should furnish a description for all the rest of Europe. Others speak of Louisiana as one vast forest or wilderness:

'Missouri marches through his world of woods.'—Barlow.

Which is far from being the case; for excepting on the banks of this river, and that not more than one half its course, the country through which it passes, is deplorably deficient in woods. If then, we are to describe Louisiana, not from a small district, important because already the seat of population, but from the appearance of the whole, combined in a general view, we should say, that it is an extensive region of open plains and meadows, interspersed with bare untillable hills, and with the exception of some fertile tracts in the vicinity of the great rivers by which it is traversed, resembling the grassy steppes of Tartary or the Saharas of Africa, but without the numerous morasses and dull uniformity of the one, or the dreary sterility of the other. The fertile tracts are

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chiefly to be found in the narrow vallies of the great rivers Missouri, Mississippi, Arkansas, Red River, and some of their principal tributaries; the two largest bodies of fertile soil are the delta of the Mississippi, which is much interspersed with lakes, marshes, and sunken lands, that will require ages to reclaim, and the territory of the Missouri, as limited by the boundaries lately agreed on with the Indians, which bears a strong resemblance to the West Tennessee in some of its features."

In order to give a systematic view he adopts an expression of Volney, and calls the country between the Apalachian, or Alleghany mountains, and the mountains of the Missouri, "the valley of the Mississippi." From that father of American rivers, it is observed that the section of the valley on the western side is twice the extent of that on the eastern side; and in most respects entirely different. He explains the regularity of the great western chain of mountains, which he regards as a continuation of the Annahuac, or Andes of South-America, and which, at the heads of those western rivers, presents a range of table land, far more elevated than any other part of our northern continent. After showing the connection of those heights along the head waters of the Washita with the Cordilleras, or dividing mountains between the Rio del Norte and the Red River, and the other spurs between that and the Arkansas, he remarks:

"A remarkable feature in this western side of the great valley, is its deficiency of wood, while the opposite, (with the exception of some parts on the north side of the Ohio, where the woods have been burnt) is a close and deep forest. The woods continue for a short distance up the Mississippi before they disappear, and the grassy plains begin. The banks of the Missouri are clothed with luxuriant forest trees for three or four hundred miles, after which, they gradually become bare, and the trees diminish in size; at first we find thin groves of the kind of poplar called cotton wood, but of a diminutive growth, intermixed with willows; next the same tree, reduced to half its height, and resembling an orchard tree; after this, a thin border of Shrubbery is almost the only ornament of the margin of the river. The same thing may be said of the Arkansas and Red River.

"Taking the distance to the mountains to be about nine hundred miles, of the first two hundred the larger proportion on the Missouri and its waters, is well adapted to agricultural settlements, its soil and conveniences are equal if not superior to those of Tennessee or Illinois; this tract will include the greater part of the White and Osage rivers, the lower Mississippi, and for at least one hundred and fifty miles north of this last river. The proportion of wood gradually lessens to the west, and still more to the north, with the addition that the lands become of an inferior quality. For the next three hundred miles, the country will scarcely admit of compact settlements of any great extent, the wooded parts form trifling exceptions to its general surface, and are never met with but on the margin of the rivers. We may safely lay it down, that after the first two hundred miles, no trees are found on the

uplands, save stunted pines or cedars; the rest of the country consists of open plains of vast magnitude, stretching beyond the boundary of the eye, and chequered by numerous waving ridges, which enable the traveller to see his long and wearisome journey of several days before him. Yet, it does not seem to me, that the soil of this tract is any where absolutely unproductive; it is uniformly covered with herbage, though not long and luxuriant like that of the plains nearer the centre of the valley; it is short and close, but more nutritious to the wild herds than the coarse grass of the common prairie. This tract has not the dreary barrenness described by Johnson in his tour to the Hebrides; the green carpet which covers, and the beautiful shrubberies which adorn it, afford relief to the eye. But again, it is very doubtful whether trees could be cultivated; for I observed that the trees which by accident are permitted to grow, are but dwarfs, the oak, for instance, is not larger than an orchard tree, the plumb is nothing more than a shrub, in some places not exceeding a currant bush. There are, however, scattered over the immense waste, a number of spots which greatly surpass in beauty any thing I have ever seen to the east of the Mississippi. But there are others again, barren in the extreme, producing nothing in the best soil but hysop and the prickly pear. The next four hundred miles, stretching to the mountains, partake of the same character with the last, excepting that it is still more barren and rugged, more deficient in water, and the spots capable of receiving settlements so distant from each other, that great difficulties will be encountered by those who may think of living there. An exception is, however, to be made in favor of the country about the sources of the principal rivers, which rise in the Missouri mountains; for some distance down these rivers it is much better suited to settlements than the parts which I have just described; about the heads of the Missouri, the Yellow Stone, the Platte, the Arkansas, &c. settlements might be formed, but unfortunately these are too remote.

"I have described the second tract watered by the Missouri, as a specimen of that which lies west of the Mississippi, and south of the north west chain of lakes. The country south of the Arkansas, that on Red River, and the greater part of the province of Texas, have similar features. Thus it appears, that with the exception of a belt of one hundred and fifty, or two hundred miles in width, at most, stretching from the Missouri, in a line parallel with the course of the Mississippi, across the Arkansas and Red River to the Sabine, about twice the territory of New-York, but not a tenth part of the western section of the valley, the province of Louisiana is little better than a barren waste, and that the eastern side will always contain a much greater population.

"From what has been said, it will be seen that the prevailing idea, and with which we have so much flattered ourselves, of these western regions being, like the rest of the United States, susceptible of cultivation, and affording endless outlets to settlements, is certainly erroneous."

He then gives a more free and fanciful description of those vast prairies, or natural meadows, which he denominates the "Paradise of Hunters," and describes as a gently undulating sea of bright green. Those wastes, useless and even injurious

as they may be in a civilized country, afford to the traveller delightful scenes, not only of softly sweet picturesque, but often of sublime effect; and filling the principal extent, as well as constituting the first characteristic feature of the country, they seem to claim the chief attention. Producing abundant pasturage, they will probably never be destitute of inhabitants; either the present Indian tribe will form independent states there, and occupy them, like Tartar hordes, to the annoyance of the future civilized settlers on the rich borders of the rivers, or else be expelled by the lazy and outlawed of the whites, who may form, in their stead, bands more dangerously savage. But, leaving the political dreamers to imagine the consequences of these things, we proceed to our author's description of realities not less unlike our Atlantic scenes:

"Other causes, as in Tartary, might operate to prevent the growth of woods in the greater part of the western region; but something of a different kind must have effected a change in this country, which apparently was once covered with trees. What immense quantities of the earth must have been carried off, to form the great alluvions of the Mississippi, by means of the Arkansas, Red River, and chiefly from the Missouri, not to mention the vast quantities lost in the Gulf of Mexico! The result of a calculation would be curious. The proofs of the loss which this country has sustained, are very evident in the neighborhood of nearly all the rivers which discharge themselves into the Missouri above the Platte. Some of the appearances where the earth has been thus carried away, may rank among our greatest curiosities. The traveller, on entering a plain, is deceived at the first glance, by what appears to be the ruins of some great city: he sees rows of houses stretching for several miles, along apparently regular streets. There seems to be all the symmetry and order of a town built on a magnificent plan, and the occasional deviations from this plan, in imagination, represent palaces, temples, or structures standing detached from the rest. These appearances are caused by the washing away of the earth and less durable substances, while the veins of stone which pervade the mass, continue undecayed, and seem to be walls constructed by human hands. The horizontal strata which mark them, form the different stories, while the detached hills of various sizes and shapes, with their evergreen, creeping junipers, on their tops, represent the isolated edifices. The remarkable walls described by Lewis and Clark on the Missouri, have been produced in this way."

The extract of a letter from Mr. Sibley, United States' factor in the Osage nation, is not less interesting:

"The Grand Saline is situated about 280 miles south west of Fort Osage, between two forks of a small branch of the Arkansas, one of which washes its southern extremity, and the other, the principal one, runs nearly parallel, within a mile of its opposite side. It is a hard level plain of a reddish colored sand, and of an irregular or mixed figure; its greatest length is from north west to south east, and its circumference full 30 miles—from the

appearance of drift wood that is scattered over, it would seem that the whole plain is at times inundated by the overflowing of the streams that pass near it. This plain is entirely covered in dry hot weather, from two to six inches deep, with a crust of beautiful clean white salt, of a quality rather superior to the imported brown salt; it bears a striking resemblance to a field of brilliant snow after a rain, with a light crust on its top. On a bright sunny morning the appearance of this natural curiosity is highly picturesque. It possesses the quality of looming or magnifying objects, and this in a very striking degree, making the small billets of wood appear as formidable as trees. Numbers of buffaloes were on the plain. The Saline is environed by a strip of marshy prairie with a few scattering trees, mostly of cotton wood. Behind, there is a range of sand hills, some of which are perfectly naked, others thinly clothed with verdure, and dwarf plum bushes, not more than thirty inches in height, from which we procured abundance of the most delicious plums I ever tasted. The distance to a navigable branch of the Arkansas about 80 miles, the country tolerably level, and the water courses easily passed.

"About 60 miles south west from this, I came to the Saline, the whole of this distance lying over a country remarkably rugged and broken, affording the most romantic and picturesque views imaginable. It is a tract of about 75 miles, in which nature has displayed a great variety of the most strange and whimsical vagaries. It is an assemblage of beautiful meadows, verdant ridges, and rude misshaped piles of red clay thrown together in the utmost apparent confusion, yet affording the most pleasing harmonies, and presenting in every direction an endless variety of curious and interesting objects. After winding along for a few miles on the high ridges, you suddenly descend an almost perpendicular declivity of rocks and clay, into a series of level fertile meadows, watered by some beautiful rivulets, and here and there adorned with shrubby cotton trees, elms and cedars. These meadows are divided by chains formed of red clay, and huge masses of gypsum, with here and there a pyramid of gravel. One might imagine himself surrounded by the ruins of some ancient city, and that the plains had sunk by some convulsion of nature, more than 100 feet below its former level; for some of the huge columns of red clay rise to the height of 200 feet perpendicular, capped with rocks of gypsum, which the hand of time is ever crumbling off, and strewing in beautiful transparent flakes along the declivities of the hill, glittering like so many mirrors in the sun."

(To be continued.)

AMERICAN MANUFACTURES.

On Tuesday evening last, a large number of the citizens of this District met at Davis' Hotel to determine on some measures for the encouragement of Domestic Manufactures. There were present, in consequence of an invitation, Mr. Sampson, the well known New-York lawyer, and Messrs. Hertell and Lawrence, of the same city. Their present visit to this place is in the character of deputies from the New-York society for the promotion of Domestic Manufactures, delegated for the

purpose of calling the attention of Congress to that subject.

General John P. Van Ness was called to the chair, and Mr. Seaton appointed secretary.

Mr. Sampson delivered to the meeting a speech of considerable length, in his usual diffusive manner. To us this was the indulgence of a high curiosity, as we had never heard him speak before. Though we did not know his person, and notwithstanding his unexpected brogue, we recognized him at once by the extraordinary peculiarities that his first remarks exhibited in common with all his printed speeches; and truly we were much amused, and sometimes much delighted, with his strange repellent mixture of pathos, humour, sublimity, and sentimentality; and with the fantastical union of negligent and elaborate phraseology.

With his sentiments we coincide entirely; and, indeed, we believe that only one opinion exists at present in the country, in regard to the represented necessity of arrangements for placing our manufacturing establishments in a more living-like condition.

"It was, on motion,

Resolved unanimously, That a society be formed in this District, for the purpose of furthering the objects of this meeting.

Resolved, That a committee of five persons be appointed to draft a constitution for the government of the society.

Whereupon,

The following gentlemen were appointed to form the said committee: viz. James H. Blake, Esq. Commodore David Porter, Ferdinando Fairfax, General Walter Smith, and the Hon. William Cranch."

PUBLIC DOCUMENTS.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE MILITIA.

Report of the committee to whom was referred so much of the President's Message as relates to the re-organization or classification of the militia of the United States, (Mr. Harrison chairman.)

January 17, 1817.

The committee of the House of Representatives, to whom was referred so much of the president's message as relates to the re-organization and classification of the militia, and the report of the acting secretary of war, of the 13th ultimo, report herewith a bill for that purpose.

The organization of regiments, brigades and divisions, has been adopted by the committee in opposition to very high authority, because it is the one which has heretofore been used in all the States, and because it appeared better suited to the tactics of the present day than the new complex system of the legion recommended by Gen. Knox in his report of 1790.

The mode of classification contained in the bill has been frequently recommended in the reports of committees of the House, and in those of the department of war. The effects of this plan will be felt only when the militia are called into the service of the United States, and will not affect

the constitution of the corps, as it now exists, for the ordinary duties of muster and discipline: the advantages of a system that will bring into the same corps, for the duties of the field, men of the same age and vigor, and throw the burden of military duty upon that class of citizens who would be enabled to perform it with fewer personal sacrifices, were the motives to its adoption.

The junior or middle class will be composed of men who have small families, or those who have none; who are in the full enjoyment of bodily strength and activity, and whose minds will be more easily excited to military ardor and the love of glory than those of a more advanced period of life.

In the performance of the duty assigned them, the committee progressed thus far without difficulty; but they considered their task as barely commenced. An organization, however perfect, is but a single step towards the desirable object; the great difficulty to be encountered is the application of a system of discipline, or military instruction, to a great population, scattered over an immense territory.

The accomplishment of this object at once is evidently not within the power of the government. To instruct the present militia of the country to any useful extent, would require a larger portion of their time than they can possibly spare from the duty of providing for their families, unless they are liberally paid. To pay them would absorb all the resources of the nation. The alternative appears to be, to direct the efforts of the government to instruct such a portion of the militia as their means will allow, and which would produce the most beneficial result upon the whole mass: leaving to the effects of another system the gradual introduction of those military acquirements, which, in a republican government, it is so essential for every citizen to possess. Acting upon this principle, and believing that the instruction which it is in the power of the government to give, would be more usefully bestowed upon the whole of the officers and sergeants of the militia than upon any particular class, the sections of the bill which relate to this part of the subject, have been adopted by the committee. They have also considered it to be proper to annex some estimates of the annual expense of the system they recommend.

Although it may be considered, that by presenting a bill for the "organization and classification" of the militia, and the exposition of their motives which accompany it, the committee have performed the task assigned them by the resolution under which they acted; they have, nevertheless, believed it to be their duty to submit some further views, the result of their deliberations upon this important subject.

This course may be more excusable, as the committee have no hesitation in acknowledging that the plan embraced by the bill is a mere expedient; a choice of difficulties; a system, which, although it will place the militia upon a much better footing than they have before stood on, yet is not likely to produce that great desideratum—that indispensable requisite in a government constituted like ours—the diffusion of a military spirit and military information throughout the great mass of the people.

The part of the subject which still remains to be discussed, will be best understood by dividing it into two distinct propositions:

1st. Is it desirable that the whole male population of the United States, of the proper age, should be trained to the use of arms, so as to supersede, under any circumstances, the necessity of a standing army?

2d. Is it practicable?

The solicitude which has been manifested by the great men who have successively filled the office of chief magistrate of the United States, for the adoption of a system of military discipline for the militia, which would produce the effect contemplated by the first proposition, sufficiently manifests their sense of its importance. The subject was often and warmly recommended by the father of his country, and, at an early period of his administration, a plan for the purpose was proposed by the secretary of war, and, being corrected agreeably to his suggestions, was submitted to the national legislature. It is believed that objections to the expense and supposed difficulty of executing this plan, and not to its object, was the cause of its being rejected. Is the opinion, which prevailed at that period, that an energetic national militia was to be regarded as the capital security of a free republic, less apparent at the present? Has any thing since occurred, either in the history of our own or of any other country, to show that a standing "army, forming a distinct class in the community," is the proper defence of a government constructed like ours? Do the events of the late war show that discipline is not necessary for the militia? or does the present aspect of the political world afford so much security as to justify the indifference which prevails in providing an effectual national defence.

It is impossible that any American can recur to many of the events, and particularly to the concluding scenes of the late war, without feeling that elevation of mind which a recollection of his country's glory is calculated to produce.

There are, however, others, and not a few, that are eminently calculated to show that an immense sacrifice of blood and treasure can be distinctly traced to the want of discipline in the militia. The glorious success which, in several instances, crowned their efforts, was the result of uncommon valor, or of valor united with the advantage of a position suited to their peculiar character. The greater part of the American militia, accustomed from their early youth to the use of fire arms, are doubtless more formidable than any other troops in the world in the defence of a line or rampart. Victories in the field are gained by other qualities—by those disciplined evolutions which give harmony and concert to numerous bodies of men, and enable whole armies to move with the activity and address of single combatants. Let our militia be instructed, and America would be equal to a contest with the rest of the world united. The improvements which have been made in the art of war since the commencement of the French revolution, give greater advantages to invading and disciplined armies, acting against those of a contrary character, than they before possessed. This arises from their increased activity, produced by the great multiplication of their light troops; the celerity of movement given to the artillery; and above all, to the improvements in the staff, placing the subsistence of large armies upon a footing of security, beyond what was formerly supposed to be possible. An improvement in tactics, which gives advantages to the professed soldier who fights for conquest,

over the citizen who bears arms only in defence of his country, is perhaps to be regretted, and no alternative is left to the latter but to perfect himself in the same arts and discipline. It is believed that there is no instance on record, of a republic, whose citizens had been trained to the use of arms, having been conquered by a nation possessing a different form of government. Small republics have been overthrown by those which were more powerful; as Saguntum destroyed by Carthage, and Numantia by Rome; but it has been observed of those governments, that "walls and towers became their funeral piles—leaving nothing to their conquerors but their ashes."

The committee cannot conceive that any aspect, however pacific it may be, which the governments of Europe may for the present have assumed towards this country, should be used as an argument to procrastinate, even for a day, any measure calculated to render their future hostility abortive. It cannot be believed that any real friendship can exist in the breasts of the sovereigns of that continent, for a government which has been founded upon principles so opposite to theirs, and which, by the happiness it diffuses, affords an eternal satire and reproach upon their conduct. Whatever security there may be derived from their policy, none can certainly be expected from their forbearance, whenever, from a change of circumstances, they may think it proper to change their policy. The liberties of America must then be preserved as they were won—by the arms, the discipline, and the valor of her free born sons.

But the defence of our country against a foreign enemy does not constitute the only (perhaps not the chief) motive of military improvements, to the extent contemplated by the proposition we are considering. The safety of a republic depends as much upon the equality in the use of arms amongst its citizens, as upon the equality of rights; nothing can be more dangerous in such a government, than to have a knowledge of the military art confined to a part of the people—for sooner or later that part will govern.

The effects of discipline, possessed by a few, to control numbers without, is to be seen in all the despotic governments of modern, as well as ancient times.

In general, however, the subjects of those despotic governments, which preserve their authority by standing armies, are not allowed the use of arms; but the use of arms is not alone sufficient. A striking example of this is to be found in one of the Grecian republics: The Spartans were enabled, by the force of discipline alone, to keep in subjection for ages the Helots, and other ancient inhabitants of Laconia. These men were not only allowed the use of arms, but upon almost every occasion formed the greater part of the Lacedæmonian army: nor were they deficient in bravery; but they were not permitted to learn that admirable discipline which distinguished the Oplites, or heavy armed infantry of Sparta.

Another important consideration, urging the diffusion of a military spirit amongst our citizens, is the counterpoise it will afford to that inordinate desire of wealth which seems to have pervaded the whole nation, bringing with it habits of luxury, manners and principles highly unfavourable to our republican institutions.

The first effect of this state of society is the substitution of a standing army for a national militia. Upon this subject, the committee beg leave to

make a quotation from the report of General Knox, corrected by President Washington. "It is," says the patriotic secretary, "the introduction of vice and corruption of manners into the mass of the people, that renders a standing army necessary. It is when public spirit is despised, and avarice, indolence, and effeminacy of manners predominate, and prevent the establishment of institutions which would elevate the minds of the youth in the paths of virtue and honor, that a standing army is formed and rivetted forever." So true is the principle here contended for, that it is believed there is no instance in history of a nation losing its liberties where the military spirit of the people did not decline in the same proportion that the corruption of manners advanced. Nor was any free government ever overturned by an internal convulsion, until the destruction of that spirit had been first produced in the *body of the people*. It was not until the amusements of the theatre, the baths, and the public gardens had superseded the exercises of the Campus Martius, that a Roman army dared to revolt against its country, and with the power of the sword to substitute for its free institutions the arbitrary will of a dictator, eighty years before the successful usurpation of Cæsar—the revolt of an army could have produced no such consequence.

But the habits of the people had been changed; no longer in every Roman citizen was to be found a trained and practised soldier; the higher tactics were cultivated indeed with zeal and success by a martial nobility. No period had been more prolific of great generals. At none had the discipline of the legions been so perfect; but they were no longer filled by citizens taking their routine of service. The military had become a distinct profession; composed of men who, in the habits of war and pillage, had forgotten the sacred obligations attached to their character as citizens, and who were ever as ready, upon the suggestion of their leader, to turn their arms against their country, as the enemy whom they were raised to oppose.

As in every age, then, and in every country the same cause will produce the same effects, the palladium of American liberty must be the diffusion of military discipline and a military spirit through the whole body of the people.

But, secondly, Is the object attainable?

That it is not attainable by any of the systems which have heretofore been in use in the United States, is very evident from the little success which has attended them. The late war repeatedly exhibited the melancholy fact of large corps of militia going to the field of battle without understanding a single elementary principle, and without being able to perform a single evolution. Yet militia laws exist, and have existed in all the States since the war of the revolution, which set apart with great precision a number of days in each year for the purposes of training and discipline. But from this plan no good fruit has ever been produced. It was an error, indeed, common to all the militia systems in use in the United States, that the periods for training were too short and too distant from each other to produce much benefit.

To remedy this defect camps of discipline have been recommended. One of the reasons which governed the committee in rejecting that part of the secretary of war's recommendation has been explained above; but if that objection could be overcome, the committee are far from thinking

that the object could at all be accomplished in that way. There is another more formidable obstacle to success; more formidable, because it arises from the nature of our government, and the constitution of the human character. The sentiments and habits of a free country necessarily produces amongst the citizens a superior restlessness under restraint, than is to be met with in the subjects of a monarchy. This spirit frequently manifests itself even in a career of military services where the high interests involved, (and in which they largely partake) and the evident necessity of discipline, might be supposed able to correct it. There can scarcely be a restraint more vexatious and disgusting to a grown man than the initiatory lessons of the military art. Military discipline consists in the observance of a number of minute particulars, which to the novice in arms have no apparent object; but which form the links of a beautiful and connected system. It is believed, that to this cause is to be attributed the little progress which has been made in training the militia of the United States; nor is there much prospect that any change of system could, with regard to the *present militia*, produce the result at which we aim.

In searching for land marks to guide us to our object, it will be in vain that we direct our attention to the modern nations of Europe; from them we can borrow nothing to aid our purpose: governments formed upon artificial distinctions in society, which estimate their security by the inability of their subjects to resist oppression, can furnish a free people with no guides in organizing a system of defence which shall be purely national. We are, however, not without resource.

The ancient republics, from which we have drawn many of the choicest maxims upon which to found our civil institutions, will furnish also a most perfect model for our system of national defence. The whole secret of ancient military glory—the foundation of that wonderful combination of military skill and exalted valor which enabled the petty republic of Athens to resist the mighty torrent of Persian invasion; which formed the walls of Sparta, and conducted the Roman legions (influenced indeed by unhallowed motives) to the conquest of the world, will be found in the military education of the youth. The victories of Marathon and Plata, of Cynocéphale and Pydna, were the practical results of the exercises of the Campus Martius and Gymnasia. It is on a foundation of this kind, and of this kind only, that an energetic national militia can be established.

"An examination into the employments and obligations of individuals comprising the society," says Gen. Knox, "will evince the impossibility of diffusing an adequate knowledge of the art of war by any other means than a course of discipline during the period of non-age; the time necessary to acquire this important knowledge cannot be afforded at any other period of life with so little injury to the public or private interests." Nothing is more true than what is here advanced, and yet it is most singular that the amiable and patriotic Secretary should have founded his plan upon a course of instruction to commence within the limits of non-age, indeed, but at so advanced a period of it, that all the objections which could be made to the disciplining at a more advanced age will apply equally to it, with the addition of others which are more cogent, and which are supposed to be inherent in the system itself. Of his

advanced corps, composed of the youth of 18, 19 and 20 years of age, those of 18 and 19 are to be drawn out for thirty days in each year, and those of 20 for ten days, to be instructed in camps of discipline.

It has been strongly urged against this plan, that the separation of the youth at that critical age from the superintending vigilance of their parents and guardians, would be a very dangerous step, and that the loss of time from the pursuit of their professions and occupations would prove to them a most serious evil.

Whatever force there may be in these objections, the committee are fully persuaded that the improvement to be derived from the execution of this plan would not compensate for the expense and loss of time it would occasion. The perfection of discipline, as it regards the soldier, is the grace, the precision, and address with which he performs certain evolutions. To arrive at this perfection long continued practice is essential.

And since it must be evident that the time necessary for this purpose cannot be taken from the avocations of our citizens after they have arrived at the age of manhood, the only alternative is to devise a system of military instruction, which shall be engrained on, and form a part of the ordinary education of our youth.

The organization of a system, thus extensive in its operations, must necessarily be a work of some time and difficulty. The want of statistical information will prevent the committee from submitting to the House, at this time, more than the outline of their plan. It is embraced in the following propositions:

As the important advantages of the military part of the education of youth will accrue to the community, and not to the individuals who acquire it, it is proper that the whole expense of the establishment should be borne by the public treasury.

That, to comport with the equality, which is the basis of our constitution, the organization of the establishment should be such as to extend, without exception, to every individual of the proper age.

That to secure this, the contemplated military instruction should not be given in distinct schools, established for that purpose, but that it should form a branch of education in every school within the United States.

That a corps of the military instructors should be formed to attend to the gymnastic and elementary part of education in every school in the United States, whilst the more scientific part of the art of war shall be communicated by professors of tactics to be established in all the higher seminaries.

The committee are fully aware that the establishment of an institution, which, from its nature, is calculated to produce an important change in the manners and habits of the nation, will be received with caution and distrust by a people jealous of their liberties, and who boast of a government which executes its powers with the least possible sacrifice of individual rights. An encroachment upon individual rights forms no part of their system. It is not a conscription which withdraws from an anxious parent a son for whose morals he fears more than for his life. It is not a Persian or Turkish mandate to educate the youth within the purlieus of a corrupt court, but a sys-

tem as purely republican in practice as in principle.

The means are furnished by the government, and the American youth are called upon to qualify themselves under the immediate inspection of their parents, or of tutors chosen by their parents for the sacred task of defending the liberties of their country.

Although the system of General Knox widely differs from that which has been recommended by the committee, his opinion of the effects to be produced by it is conceived to be more particularly applicable to the latter. "If the United States," says he, "possess the vigor of mind to establish the first institution, for the military instruction of the youth, it may reasonably be expected to produce the most unequivocal advantages. A glorious national spirit will be introduced with its extensive train of political consequences. The youth will imbibe a love of their country, reverence and obedience to its laws, courage and elevation of mind, openness and liberality of character, accompanied by a just spirit of honor. In addition to which, their bodies will acquire a robustness, greatly conducive to their personal happiness; while habit, with its silent but efficacious operations, will durably cement the system."

That the House may possess the information necessary to act upon this important subject, the committee respectfully recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the secretary of war be required to prepare and lay before this House, at the next session of Congress, a plan for the military instruction of all the youth of the United States, in the way which is best calculated for the purpose, with as little injury as possible to the ordinary course of education.

SITE FOR A NAVAL DEPOT.

Report of the Secretary of the Navy, communicating, in obedience to a resolution of the Senate, information relating to the selection of a site for a Naval Depot.

Navy Department, Jan. 18, 1817.

SIR,—In obedience to the resolutions of the honorable Senate of the United States of the 21st of December, 1815, and the 8th of January, inst. I have the honor to lay before the Senate all the information in the possession of this Department respecting surveys of the waters of the Chesapeake, the Middle Ground, and the several sites proper for the establishment of docks and a naval depot, with a roll of the several surveys made by order of this Department, in conjunction with officers of the corps of engineers, under orders from the War Department. Schedule of which, and other accompanying documents is herewith enclosed.

In relation to the site for docks and naval depot within the Chesapeake, I respectfully refer to the separate opinions of the commissioners of the navy board, and the officers who made the surveys; and whose opinions being at variance in respect to the local advantages of the places designated, I have deemed it most proper to leave the decision to the honorable Senate, without expressing any preference arising from my own view of the subject; as a spirit of candid investigation appears to have marked their deliberate consideration of the

comparative advantages, with a single regard to the public good.

I have the honor to be,
With the highest respect, sir,
Your most obedient servant,
B. W. CROWNSHIELD.

The hon. the President of the Senate.

Copy of Com. John Rodgers's letter to the Secretary of the Navy, relative to a naval site and rendezvous on the waters of Chesapeake Bay.

Navy Commissioners' Office, Dec. 23, 1816.

SIR,—Having, in company with the other commissioners of the navy board, examined those places designated in your letter of the 7th of May last, for the purpose of reporting, through you, for the consideration of the President of the United States, the opinion of the navy commissioners as to the means most proper to be adopted for the defence of the Chesapeake Bay in time of war; it is a source of unpleasant reflection, not only to myself, but I am confident equally so to the other commissioners, to find, on comparing our opinions, that we do not entirely agree as to the mode by which this truly important object might, most probably, be accomplished. I regret this the more from the persuasion, that it would have been more agreeable to you, and more satisfactory to the President, had we found all the data upon which we might have formed a correct estimate, of such positive character as to admit of no diversity of opinion. As, however, different opinions are entertained by the members of the board, we have judged it best that each member should make a separate report;—trusting that from these conflicting opinions, and the facts and arguments adduced in support of each, the best means of obtaining the highly important object in view may be elicited.

I proceed, with respectful deference for the opinions of my brother commissioners, to submit those views of this important question, which the most attentive consideration and anxious investigation of facts, have produced in my mind.

From the distance between the nearest points of the Middle Ground and Horse-Shoe, the great depth of water between those places, and their exposed situation to the mountainous waves, rolling in from the Atlantic ocean, unobstructed, during the prevalence of south-easterly gales, I incline to the opinion, that it would be extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to erect batteries, at any cost, however great, that would resist the tumult of the whole Atlantic ocean, drawn as it were to a focus, by the peculiar formation of the coast at that point.

In another view, such an attempt might be hazardous; for it may be seriously questioned, whether the erection of batteries in that part of the channel of Chesapeake Bay which is the most confined, would not produce a new channel through that immense bank of sand, the Middle Ground, thereby changing the course of its waters, rendering the batteries wholly useless, and subjecting the navigation of the bay to destruction at its very confluence with the Atlantic ocean? A new channel, thus formed, would necessarily displace immense deposits of sand from the Middle Ground, and thereby, most probably, to the destruction of the navigation, complete the bar that nature has already more than two thirds finished, across the entrance of the bay.

For these reasons, the erection of batteries between the Horse Shoe and Middle Ground, appears to me, if not impracticable, at least unadvisable.

I will now examine the navigation from Cape Henry to Hampton Roads, and thence to Norfolk, for the purpose of demonstrating, by unquestionable facts, how far Norfolk unites the advantages essential to the purpose of a great naval rendezvous and depot of maritime stores.

As an outer harbor, Hampton Roads is easy of ingress and egress to ships of every class. At its entrance from the bay, by erecting a formidable battery at Old Point Comfort, and another at the distance of one mile on the shoal of Willoughby's Point, it might be so far defended as to prevent a hostile fleet, however formidable, from attempting to enter it without having in view the accomplishment of some great object. On ordinary occasions, the risk which an enemy would then incur, from an attempt to enter Hampton Roads, would no doubt be sufficient to deter him; but an object, worthy of the risk, might present itself—and, in such case, an enemy availing himself of the most favorable wind and tide, might attempt it, and would probably succeed. Passing these batteries, as he might do under such circumstances, with a velocity equal to fourteen miles an hour, the effect of the batteries would be rendered very uncertain, and he would be in their reach only 8 minutes, 17 seconds! Should he succeed in entering the road he might anchor in various situations, from four to four and a half miles in every direction from the shore. My own personal observation enables me to add, that during the prevalence of north-easterly gales, particularly in the winter season, Hampton Roads is subject to a very heavy sea, which may be ascribed to its great width at its entrance, and its exposure to the N. E.

As an inner harbor, Norfolk may be easily defended both by land and by sea; and there is in its vicinity an abundance of good timber. These are great advantages; but from the difficulty of getting in or out of Elizabeth river, arising from the narrowness of the channel in many places, and the various courses necessary to be steered, (from W. N. W. to E. N. E. points directly opposite) before you reach Cape Henry, added to a shoal at its confluence with the waters of Hampton Roads, on which there are only 20 feet 8 inches at low water, and not more than 24 feet 2 inches at high water, during the prevalence of neap-tides—and at no time, excepting the spring-tides, more than 22 feet at low and 25 feet at high water, present to my mind insuperable objections to Norfolk as a navy-yard, particularly when it is recollected how imperfect and insecure Hampton Roads would be as an outer harbour.

I will now proceed to state the advantages and disadvantages peculiar to York river, considered as a place for a naval rendezvous and depot of naval stores—below Yorktown as an outer, and above it as an inner harbour.

The lower part of York river being, at its mouth, only one mile wide and three quarters in breadth from shore to shore, and the channel only about fifteen hundred yards from flat to flat, and affording, as it does, a safe navigation at all times and in all seasons for ships of the greatest draught of water, is, in my opinion, suitable for an outer harbour. With the aid of land batteries an inferior may be defended against a superior force of ships. Like Hampton Roads, however, it is subject to a rough sea during the prevalence of easterly gales; but in this river that disadvantage is greatly diminished by the fact, that with any wind that would make this anchorage objectionable, or that would

enable an enemy of superior force to approach you, (supposing this place not to be fortified) you can, with perfect security and ease, get under weigh and run into the inner harbour, above the batteries at Yorktown and Gloucester.

As an inner harbour and naval depot, York river, above Yorktown, does not combine every advantage desirable, not having any bason or deep bay in which ships could be sheltered from the draught of the river, and there not being an abundant supply of timber immediately in its vicinity.* It has, however, every other essential requisite; being completely susceptible of defence against a land or naval force, and affording at all times, and in all tides, an easy and safe navigation to ships of the greatest draught of water—there being for at least 10 miles above Yorktown, where the river is actually only 900 yards wide from shore to shore, where less than six fathoms of water.

Another very prominent fact in relation to the outer harbour of York, more than counterbalances the objections stated. From that harbour ships passing up and down the Chesapeake bay are exposed to full view; indeed, the moment a ship enters the bay you can discover her. You would there have the advantage of watching the movements of an enemy, from a safe harbour. If he comes with a force too formidable for you to resist him in that position, you can retire—the same wind that enables him to approach you, would enable you to retire to a place of safety. If circumstances would justify your attacking him, you, might do so, with the advantage of having the earliest intelligence of his approach.

Hence, although York river does not possess every advantage that could be desired, as respects either its inner or outer harbour, it does, in my opinion, unite more of the essential requisites than nature has bestowed on almost any other place. From its particular position (which the chart will show) when aided by a naval force, it is the only point deserving the name of the key to the Chesapeake bay.

I proceed now to examine St. Mary's river.

This river is situated on the north side of the Potomac, about seven miles above Point Look Out, the next above Smith's Point, with which it forms the entrance into the Potomac. By some it is urged that this place, as respects salubrity of climate, is preferable to either Norfolk or York. As a safe and commodious harbour, it is, perhaps, not excelled by any in the United States. At its entrance it is about 3 miles wide, and the water is 32 to 33 feet deep: for $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 miles up, its width gradually decreases, until you pass two projecting points at opposite sides, within which the depth at low water is about 24 feet—and the river from point to point about half a mile wide; from this to a place about 2 miles further up, the river is, by two other projecting points, diminished to about 500 yards in width, presenting above those points a beautiful bason, in which there is, near the entrance inside, 20 or 21 feet at low water.

This river above, where it is perfectly susceptible of defence against a naval force, presents in several respects, the most seducing reasons for its selection as a naval depot and rendezvous. But, situated as it is, in a narrow peninsula, having the

* Note—Although it would be an advantage if York river had a bason, or deep bay, to shelter ships from the draught of the river, yet its not having that advantage is not to be considered as constituting any serious objection to the river.

Patuxent on the one side, and the Potomac on the other, the protection of such an establishment would be attended with great expense. To protect it against a land force, it would be necessary to erect strong batteries; and the annual expense of maintaining an efficient garrison in them would be very great.

Such an establishment should not only be able to protect itself, but it should afford the means of protecting our own commerce in every part of the bay. This latter advantage, I am inclined to think, is not possessed in a superior degree, by St. Mary's, owing to its great distance from the sea, (95 to 100 miles;) neither do I think that, in the present infant state of our country, it could effectually protect itself against a land force, since even above the line of defence, where the batteries would necessarily be situated, the peninsula is so narrow that a superior land force might so occupy it, as to cut off all communication in the rear, thereby endangering the safety of the adjacent county, while at the same time a superior naval force, from the safe anchorage afforded, might not only cut off all communication in front by his large vessels, but his smaller vessels might destroy every merchant vessel of ours attempting to pass up to Washington or to Baltimore.

The facts stated being all that occur to me as essential in deciding the question of locating a naval depot and rendezvous, I now proceed respectfully to submit my views as to the best means of defending the Chesapeake bay generally. I assume the preliminary position, which I presume will be readily accorded to me, that in the present infant state of our country, our preparations to meet a war, should be conducted with a view to measures of defence as well as offence.

Two small but strong Martalla towers, between the eastern extreme of Lynhaven bay and the mouth of Lynhaven creek, would prevent an enemy from anchoring between those two points; and his exclusion thence would, as you will perceive by the chart, deprive him of any other safe anchorage nearer the mouth of the bay than New Point Comfort.

A strong battery on Old Point Comfort would keep him out of Hampton Roads; and two Martalla towers at the mouth of York river, would prevent his anchoring in that situation, while, at the same time, they would serve to protect it, as an outer harbour and general rendezvous for our marine force assembled in the Chesapeake bay, in time of war.

York river, fortified at Yorktown, would afford security to that important tract of country through which it passes, and secure a naval depot higher up the river. The place where I consider it advisable to locate such an establishment, is called the Clay Banks, and is about ten miles higher up than Yorktown.

While a battery at Old Point Comfort, and two Martalla towers at the mouth of York river would keep an enemy from Hampton and York, they would, with the aid of a suitable naval force, prevent his attempting to take shelter in a situation so near as New Point Comfort. Hence, being shut out of Lynhaven bay by the two towers proposed in that quarter, he would be deprived of all safe anchorage near the entrance of the bay.

The importance of depriving an enemy of anchorage in Lynhaven bay, is fully established by the fact, that it is a position more dangerous to

our commerce than any that could be occupied by any enemy within the Chesapeake bay; and if the importance of depriving him of all safe anchorage near the entrance of the bay be, as it appears to me, too obvious to admit of a doubt, then the propriety of erecting towers and batteries at the other places suggested, must necessarily be conceded.

It will, I presume, be readily admitted, in devising the most efficient means for the protection of the Chesapeake bay, that the mouth of the bay should claim the first attention, since if you can succeed in protecting that point effectually, you afford protection to all points above it. The measures which I have had the honour of suggesting have had this great object in view.

Allow me, sir, to request your attentive examination of the chart submitted. A reference to that part of it which embraces York Spit, and what is termed the head of the Middle Ground, will, I think, satisfy you of the great advantage which a respectable naval force, stationed at the mouth of York river, would possess; and that such a force, co-operating with the towers near Lynhaven bay, the battery on Old Point Comfort, and the towers of York river, proposed, would, in all probability, protect the whole commerce of the Chesapeake bay.

With respect to the Tangier islands, I have considered it unnecessary to say any thing; particularly as the report and chart made by captain Spence, afford more information than any personal observation of my own would enable me to communicate.

I have the honour to be,
With great respect, sir,
Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) JOHN RODGERS.

Hon. B. W. Crowninshield,
Secretary of the Navy.

N. B. Some difference of opinion probably exists, as to the practicability of defending, against a land force, a navy yard situated on the Clay Banks. I cannot, however, persuade myself to entertain any doubt upon the subject, since the land is there as high if not higher than any other within reach of cannon shot. There are, moreover, two large creeks, Aberdeen and Jones', that discharge their waters into York river, on each side of the proposed site, about one mile distant from its centre, by which, without any extraordinary labour or expense, the whole establishment might be insulated; and the measure by which this desirable protective effect would be produced, would furnish an ample supply of water for all the purposes of labour-saving machinery.

For further particulars relatively to the advantages of this place, permit me to refer you to the following extracts of Captain Sinclair's report:

"The mouths of these two creeks are two miles apart, but before they flow half a mile there are two branches approaching each other, within a quarter of a mile, where, after the creeks are dammed below, a canal might be cut which would insulate the place, and add greatly to its security in the rear. Indeed, it appears to be very capable of being defended by a moderately small force. The channel does not exceed a quarter of a mile in width, and is overlooked by an eminence of 30 feet for a mile or two below. The country is said to be healthy; indeed, judging from its inhabitants I should pronounce it so. The land is generally fine, and well timbered with white oak, yellow and

pitch pine, and some cedar, though not in abundance."

(Signed) JOHN RODGERS.

Copy of the communication made by Commodore Stephen Decatur, in relation to the defence of the Chesapeake Bay, and the selection of a site suitable for a Naval Depot.

Navy Commissioners' Office, Jan. 2, 1817.

SIR,—In obedience to your call of the 16th ultimo, on the navy commissioners, requiring a report of the late examination and surveys made under their direction, in pursuance of your instructions of the 7th May, I enclose you a statement of such facts as I have been enabled to collect upon this important subject. From the diversity of opinion which we have found to exist between us, upon this important subject, we have deemed it most satisfactory to give in separate reports.

This diversity was perhaps to have been expected, in a case presenting so wide a range for observation; and I trust we shall not be considered as too tenacious of our individual opinions, when it is recollected that this question involves the safety of the navy, and the protection of the extensive shores of the Chesapeake.

The first examination required by your order of the 7th is, to ascertain the most proper mode of defending the Chesapeake in time of war.

In giving my opinion upon this head, I beg leave to be understood, as disclaiming all knowledge of the expense of constructing fortifications, for particular estimates of which I beg leave to refer you to lieutenant colonel Bonford of the engineers, who accompanied us on this survey. The Chesapeake Bay can be defended from a superior hostile fleet only by fortifications sunk at some point in the channel, and the point nearest the ocean susceptible of defence, is obviously the most proper. The channel of the bay at the capes, navigable by ships of a large class, is four and three quarter miles wide, depth of water generally from ten to fifteen fathoms. The sea at this point, being uninterrupted by shoals in its roll from the Atlantic, would, in my opinion, render fortifications utterly impracticable. Ascending the bay from the capes, the channel branches at the Horse Shoe, one branch passing into Hampton Roads, the other leading up the bay itself. That branch of the channel which leads up to Hampton Roads, passes between two shoals; that on the south side called Willoughby's, and distant from Old Point Comfort about two and a quarter miles, has eight feet water on it; the one on the north side is called the Thimbles; and is distant from Old Point about three miles, and has nine feet water on it; they are about a geographical mile distant from each other. The other branch of the channel (that which passes up the bay) has a width between the Horse Shoe and the Middle Ground of four miles, and the depth of water for three fourths of this distance does not exceed four fathoms and a half, being no where more than eight fathoms.

The bottom, from a number of experiments, appears to be a solid and closely compacted sand, protected from the heavy sea of the Atlantic by the shoal of the Middle Ground, which stretches many miles to sea, and on which its violence is expended before it reaches this channel. If the Chesapeake be susceptible of defence at all, it is my opinion, this is the only point at which it can be defended. The channel at every other place, above or below, be-

ing much wider, and of much greater depth, and that works, judiciously constructed, between the tail of the Horse Shoe and the Middle Ground, would be permanent, strong evidence is furnished by those extensive works which form the Harbour of Cherbourg:—works constructed on a sand, unprotected by shoals without, where the sea is as violent, the tide infinitely stronger, and its perpendicular rise upwards of forty feet.

You will perceive, sir, that in considering the subject of defending the Chesapeake, generally, I have included the defence of Hampton Roads; not only as an arm of the Bay, nor on account of the objects of spoil, to which the banks of its rivers invite an enemy, but with reference to the other inquiry of a Naval Depot to which I shall presently call your attention. In relation to the defence of Hampton Roads particularly—if the defence of this place were the exclusive object, there is another position for the purpose, which would, probably, be preferable, which is Old Point Comfort, and the opposite shoal called the Rip Raps, which are less than one mile distant. I beg leave to refer you to a report made upon the subject by Col. Bomford, merely noticing, that I understand it was made out before it was discovered that the water on Wiltoughby's shoals and the Thimbles, was so shallow, or that those shoals approached so nearly together as they do. I will now further add the authority of general Bernard's opinion, that any distance not exceeding one mile, may be so fortified, as to be rendered impassable.

If, in addition to powerful works placed at the entrance into Hampton Roads, we add that part of the naval force already contemplated, which will probably be stationed within the Roads, the only inducement a hostile fleet could have to attempt passing heavy batteries, so moored as to aid in obstructing the enemy's passage, and sufficiently near to be sustained by the forts, in the event of their passing, I do not believe it will ever be attempted. Let us suppose Hampton Roads thus fortified, and our Naval Depot, as well as our fleet, drawn within those defences, what inducement would remain to an enemy to attempt a passage up the bay? The destruction of our fleet and our depot, would be their first object; their second would be to prevent our fleet from getting to sea; either of those objects would keep them necessarily in the vicinity of the Roads. The pillage of the shores of the Chesapeake and its waters, would be the only remaining inducement for a cruise up the bay—an inducement too trifling to permit the belief that they would abandon for it the important objects that they would leave in the neighbourhood of Hampton Roads; and more particularly when their passage up the bay, is opposed by batteries stretched across the channel at the Horse Shoe and the Middle Ground, and with a fleet, too, in their rear, ready to act, in the event of their receiving such injury, as is more than probable they would receive, in passing such works. The non-existence of any object of sufficient importance to invite an enemy up the bay, under the arrangements already stated, would render it unnecessary to have the works between the Horse Shoe and the Middle Ground, as numerous or as strong, by one half, as would be otherwise requisite. And it is my opinion, that the bay and Hampton Roads are susceptible of permanent and complete defence, by works erected at the points proposed, and the same works be made to serve for the defence of both: whereby the whole expense of fortifying the Naval

Depot would be saved, as well as the expense of keeping up garrisons. What the expense of such works would be, I am incapable of saying; but I am satisfied that the cost to the nation of defending the shores of the Chesapeake for one single war, would greatly surpass what would be requisite to erect a permanent defence of the bay: and when we connect this with the debasement of permitting the enemy to make a home of our waters, the consideration of any warrantable expenditure can scarcely be thought to oppose an obstacle to the establishment of any works which may be determined to be practicable.

I come now to the location of the naval depot; and on this point there are a few simple principles which seem decisive of the inquiry. A naval depot should possess a sufficiency of water; it should be contiguous to the ocean, otherwise the navy could not render that prompt protection to the coast, which comprises the greater part of its utility; it should, also, be connected with the means of supplies of timber and naval stores, which no posture of a war could cut off or interrupt: these are qualities of the first necessity.

There are other advantages, not indeed so indispensable, but still of a very high character, and which it would be extremely fortunate to find with the qualities of primary importance already mentioned; such, for example, as a populous neighborhood, from which supplies of labor and provisions might be commodiously drawn, and which would be at hand to give support to the depot in the event of a sudden attack; another of these incidental advantages, is a large, safe, and well defended outer harbor, into which the ships, when built, could be drawn and manœuvred without the hazard of exposure to a superior enemy.

Hampton Roads, which I consider the outer harbor of Norfolk, is eighteen miles from Cape Henry. Ships can enter or proceed to sea from it, with the wind from any quarter; it furnishes excellent anchorage, and has sufficient room for a fleet to manœuvre in under sail—an advantage which no other harbor, that I know of, possesses. This distance from Hampton Roads to the navy yard at Gosport is twelve miles, and the shoalest water, found in the river at ordinary high tides, is twenty-five feet. This depth is more than is sufficient for the seventy-fours we now have. You will find on the file in your office that the pilotage paid for the Independence, seventy-four, when she sailed for the Mediterranean, was twenty-four feet. The ships now building, although of greater capacity, will not draw so much by six inches. The present defences of Norfolk are, in my opinion, sufficient to protect it from any naval force that can be brought against it.

It will be recollected that during the late war the enemy considered it absolutely necessary to get possession of Craney Island, before they could pass up to Norfolk with their shipping; in consequence of which a combined attack by their boats and a considerable land force was made on Craney Island. The attack was repelled by a few pieces of cannon placed upon the sand; since which time it has been regularly fortified. All the approaches to Norfolk and the navy yard, by land, are interrupted by water courses, and lead through swamps; both places, with the exception of about two hundred yards, are insulated by creeks, unfordable by reason of the deep mud. Those creeks can, and, I believe, have been connected by military works, nor is there any higher ground

than that on which they stand, within cannon range of either place.

It is the opinion of military men, who have commanded there, that they are particularly well situated for defence against an attack by land.

From Craney Island up to the navy yard, which I consider the inner harbor, is six miles, in which space thirty sail of the line may lay with perfect convenience, and it is at all times so smooth as not to interrupt the ordinary work or repairs that may be required. From Norfolk to Hampton Roads large ships cannot sail when the wind is ahead, in consequence of the narrowness of the channel. But if warping anchors, with buoys, be laid down in the channel (as is the case in all men of war harbors that are close) ships can, with any wind, be warped into the Roads.

The harbors of Malta and Port Mahon, which are considered two of the best harbors in Europe, can only be left or entered, when the wind is adverse, by warping. The navy yard at Norfolk comprises, within its walls, a square of about twenty acres, one side of which lays upon the channel of the river, at which sixteen sail of the line can be laid up in ordinary, if they are brought to the pier, end on, as is practised at the naval arsenal at Antwerp.

The navy yard, in its present state, furnishes as many conveniences for building or fitting out as any yard in the United States. Two hundred thousand dollars, at least, having been already expended by the public in valuable improvements. The neighborhood furnishes abundance of oak and pine timber suitable for naval purposes, and also naval stores, a supply of which cannot be cut off by a blockading enemy. The advantage it possesses in consequence of its vicinity to a commercial city, would be considerable, both as it regards the numerous mechanics and seamen that are to be obtained there, and the protection a large population would afford in the event of a sudden attack. The climate of Norfolk is, I presume, similar to that of the shores of the Chesapeake generally on tide water.

I will now proceed to the examination of York river. From Cape Henry light-house to Gloucester town, which is the first point on York river that could be rendered sufficiently strong to prevent the passage of a hostile fleet, is thirty-two miles. Ships can enter or proceed to sea from it with all winds. The distance from Gloucester to the Clay Banks, the place contemplated for the navy yard, is seven miles, and the depth of water is sufficient for any ship at all times of tide. It can unquestionably be defended against any attack by water: it is, at present, entirely unprotected by any fortifications. From the best information I have been enabled to collect, I am induced to believe that there are several rivers putting in from the bay navigable for light craft and boats, and approaching within eight or nine miles of the Clay Banks, where a debarkation of troops might be effected;—of the nature of the intervening grounds I am unacquainted. The site selected as the best in this river for a naval depot, forms at present part of the bed of the river, and no vessel drawing ten feet water can approach the bank nearer than a quarter of a mile. As the bottom is mud, it is probable that it will be found necessary to drive piles for the foundation of the navy yard, and the whole yard must, of course, be composed of artificial or made ground. There is a creek on each side of its heading, about half a mile in the

rear, where they approach within about four hundred yards; at this point it is proposed placing the defences against a land attack. About eight hundred or a thousand yards to the right of this position and the contemplated depot, there is an extensive range of heights that overlook and command them.

In consequence of which, I am of opinion that this position cannot be defended from a land attack with a less force than would be competent to meet the assailants in the field. It is believed that a supply of oak timber may be obtained from the shores of York river; but pine, fit for naval purposes, and naval stores, must be drawn from a distance. A blockading force, in time of war, might prevent the transportation of them by water, the only means by which they could be obtained in any quantity. From the unusual straightness of York river, the mouth of which lies open to the bay, it is much more rough, with particular winds, than rivers of its width generally are.

With the wind blowing fresh up or down the river, I should apprehend that any repairs that would require working near the water, would be interrupted. The inner harbour of this river, like that of Norfolk, cannot be left or entered when the wind is ahead, except by warping.

The next point embraced by your instructions is Tangier Islands, laying about one hundred miles up the Chesapeake. From the survey and report of captain Spence, the commissioners were of opinion, that that place was totally unfit for a naval Depot, and therefore, did not proceed to examine it. For particular information respecting this place, I beg leave to refer you to Capt. Spence's survey and report.

As your instructions did not particularize St. Mary's and not being apprised that my colleagues intended to examine that place, I was not present when they did so. It lies on the upper side of the Potomac River, near its mouth, and about an hundred and twenty miles up the Chesapeake Bay. I am unacquainted with the depth of water—the extent of the harbour—its susceptibility of defence against an attack by water, or the supply of naval stores and building materials in its vicinity.

From my want of local knowledge of this place, I can say nothing as to its particular advantages, and can only point out some prominent objections which present themselves. Its distance from the ocean I consider an insuperable objection to it as a naval depot and rendezvous, in consequence of the difficulty and detention our ships might meet with in going out or returning from sea. Another objection is, that the population for a considerable distance is so thin that it cannot afford sufficient succour in case of a sudden attack.

The river Patuxent lies a few miles higher up the bay than the Potomac, and approaches where it is navigable for vessels of the largest class, within five miles of the rear of the harbour of St. Mary's. The harbour is everywhere surrounded on the land side by commanding heights, which are too numerous to be occupied and sustained except by a large army; and therefore it would be necessary that a considerable land force should be kept there at all times to ensure its safety. Another, very important objection is, that if the neighbourhood does not afford sufficient supplies of timber, which I believe is the case, they might be cut off in time of war by a blockading force. This place, as well as the harbours of Norfolk and York, from the narrowness of its channel, can only be left or

entered when the wind is adverse by warping. Its climate is very similar to the climate of those places. There is an objection common to both York and St. Mary's as the places of naval deposite, which has not yet been mentioned, and that is, that they both lie within the defences proposed to be raised from the Horse Shoe to the Middle Ground. If you present to an enemy the combined attractions of your depot and your fleet, those works for the defence of the bay must be more numerous and strong, and consequently much more expensive; and it is for this, among other reasons, that I think it so much preferable to place both these objects behind the defences proposed to be established at the mouth of Hampton Roads.

Having weighed all the advantages and disadvantages of the several positions, it is my decided opinion that the present navy yard at Norfolk, independent of the protection it would afford the Chesapeake, is, in all respects, incomparably the best place for a naval depot, if Hampton Roads be properly fortified; and in that case I should consider it the finest harbour I have ever seen.—The only objection to it, in its present state, is the mud bar at the mouth of the river, over which our largest ships cannot pass at *low water*; which is a sufficient objection in the present unprotected state of Hampton Roads, inasmuch as any of our larger ships chased into the Roads by a superior naval force at *dead low water*, could not pass the bar at the mouth of the river, and would of course, be exposed to attack. The expense of the requisite buildings for a naval depot at either of the other places, together with the fortifications necessary for the protection of them by land and by water, would, in my opinion, be much greater than would be necessary to fortify Hampton Roads completely. Should either of the other places be fortified, they would require a much larger force to garrison them, and would render no material aid in the general defence of the Chesapeake. Permit me further to observe, sir, that it is the unanimous opinion of the board that the waters of the Chesapeake should, at some point or other, be the place of a naval depot and rendezvous. The mildness of the climate enabling the workmen to continue their labour throughout almost the whole of the year, and the geographical situation of the place, seem to me to fit it eminently for this purpose. It is near the centre of our coast and of our commerce; and that portion of the navy which would be stationed there, would possess, thereby, a facility in defending both by the rapid movements it would be enabled to make; and I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that by raising the fortifications which I have proposed, and placing the depot near the ocean, the Chesapeake, at present the most vulnerable point of the coast, would become one of the strongest. It would become itself a defence to our sea-board.

The subjoined sketch of the waters in the vicinity of the Chesapeake, was furnished me, at a few hours notice, by Mr. Adams of the United States navy, who made the survey of the Chesapeake under the directions of the board. The well known talents and precision of this gentleman, leave no doubt of the accuracy of his lines of bearing, distance, and soundings. You will perceive, sir, that I have drawn my facts relative to those points from this document. I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed) STEPHEN DECATUR.

Mrs. B. W. Crowninshield, Sec. of the Navy.

(To be continued.)

NATIONAL LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

Monday, Feb. 3.—Mr. Mason of Va. from the committee to whom the subject had been referred, reported a bill to incorporate the members of the Columbian Institute; which was read.

Mr. Roberts reported the bill to amend the Claims law, further amended in conformity to the instructions of the Senate.

The bill making provision for subsisting the army of the United States, by authorizing the appointment of commissaries of subsistence, and the bill to provide for reports of the decisions of the supreme courts, were read a second time.

The bill to authorize the chairmen of committees of congress to administer oaths, was read a third time and passed.

The bill making an appropriation of fifty thousand dollars to enable the president to hold treaties with certain Indian tribes for the purposes therein mentioned, was read a third time and passed, by the following vote:

YEAS—Messrs. Ashmun, Barbour, Campbell, Condict, Gailard, Hardin, King, Loeck, Mason, Mason of N. H. Morrow, Noble, Roberts, Ruggles, Sanford, Smith, Stokes, Talbot, Tait, Taylor, Tichenor, Troup, Varnum, Williams.—24.

NAYS—Messrs. Brown, Chase, Daggett, Fromentin, Goldborough, Horsey, Mason of Va. Thompson, Wells, Wilson.—10.

The bill was sent to the other house for concurrence.

The bill for the relief of John Haslet was read a third time, passed, and sent to the other house; as also was the bill "providing for the division of certain quarter sections in future sales of the public lands."

Two messages (noted in the proceedings of the house of representatives) were read.

Thursday, Feb. 4.—Mr. Tait, from the committee to whom was recommitteed the bill to establish a separate territorial government for the eastern part of the Mississippi Territory, reported a new draught, which was read.

Mr. Barbour, from the committee on foreign relations, reported amendments to the bill from the house of representatives for more effectually preserving the neutral relations of the United States; which were read.

Mr. Tichenor submitted the following resolutions for consideration:

Resolved, That the military committee be instructed to inquire into the expediency of repealing or modifying so much of the 2d section of the act establishing the military staff, as relates to hospital surgeons' mates.

Resolved, That the military committee be instructed to inquire into the expediency of a reform in the provisions of the laws respecting the allowance and pay of private servants to the military and staff officers of the army, in order to place them on a more economical establishment.

The Senate resumed the consideration of a motion, yesterday made by Mr. Campbell, for instructing the committee on public lands to inquire into the expediency of establishing a new district for surveying public lands south of the State of Tennessee, and agreed thereto.

The bill authorizing the appointment of hospital surgeons and hospital surgeons' mates, in the navy of the United States, was read a third time, but, on motion of Mr. Daggett, was recommitteed.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Friday, Jan. 31.—The bill from the Senate, pro-

viding for the prompt settlement of public accounts, was twice read and referred.

On motion of Mr. Wheaton, the committee on the post-office and post-roads were instructed to inquire into the expediency of so far altering the post route, from Boston to Providence, as that it shall pass through the town of Wrentham, instead of Foxborough, and of extending the post route from Taunton to Foxborough. And, on motion of Mr. Fletcher, the same committee were instructed to inquire into the expediency of establishing a post route from Catlettsburg, at the mouth of Big Sandy, by Little Sandy Salt Works, Iles's Mills, Owingsville, and the mouth of Bald Eagle, to Paris.

The speaker laid before the House a report of the Washington Canal Company of the amount of their receipts and expenditures from the commencement of their operations, made in obedience to a requisition of their charter, which was ordered to lie on the table.

The House proceeded to consider the resolution offered yesterday by Mr. Jackson for the appointment of clerks to committees; and on the question of agreeing thereto, it was negatived.

Mr. Lowndes laid before the House a correspondence between himself, as chairman of the committee of ways and means, and the acting secretary of war, in relation to the expenditures and appropriations for the ordnance and quarter-master general's departments; which was ordered to be printed.

The House went into committee of the whole, Mr. Breckenridge in the chair, on the bill to prohibit commercial intercourse with ports or places into or with which the vessels of the United States are not permitted to enter and trade.

Mr. Forsyth's substitute being still under consideration.

The debate continued till four o'clock, no question having been taken, when the committee rose, reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again.

A message was received from the president of the United States, transmitting to the House an application by the minister of France, respecting the long standing claim of the heirs of Beaumarchais; which was referred to the committee on pensions and revolutionary claims.

And the House adjourned.

Saturday, Feb. 1.—The bill from the Senate "to provide for the due execution of the laws of the United States within the State of Indiana," was twice read and committed.

The bill from the Senate "to enable the people of the western part of the Mississippi Territory to form a constitution and State government, and for the admission of such State into the Union, on an equal footing with the original States," was twice read and committed.

On motion of Mr. Sharp, the committee on the public lands was instructed to inquire into the expediency of making some alteration in the boundaries of the Land District of Edwardsville, in the Illinois Territory; and into the expediency of selling section No. 16 in township No. 4 north, and Range No. 1, west, in the Illinois Territory.

The House resumed the order of the day on the bill (which has been some days under discussion) to prohibit the entry of certain vessels, &c. &c. of countries into and with whose ports we are not permitted freely to trade.

Further debate took place; when

The question was taken on the substitute for

the bill proposed by Mr. Forsyth, (to impose discriminating duties instead of prohibition and exclusion) and negatived—ayes 30.

The bill was then laid on the table, and the committee took up the bill concerning the navigation of the United States; which, having considered and amended—

The committee rose and reported both bills with amendments.

In regard to the first of these bills, a motion was made by Mr. Sheffield to postpone it indefinitely.

But a motion, by Mr. Taylor of N. Y. to lay the bill on the table, finally prevailed.

The House then took up the second bill, as amended, on motion of Mr. Lowndes, by the addition of several new sections.

Several amendments were proposed, which gave rise to considerable conversational debate, particularly one moved by Mr. Forsyth, to require that the fishing vessels (on which a bounty is paid by the United States) should be manned by a crew wholly composed (instead of three fourths, as proposed by the bill) of American citizens. The question was decided by yeas and nays, thus: yeas 71, nays 71. The speaker voted in the negative.

Monday, Feb. 3.—Mr. Hugh Nelson, from the judiciary committee, reported, without amendment, the bill from the Senate to provide for the due execution of the laws of the United States in the State of Indiana; and the bill was committed to a committee of the whole house.

Mr. Harrison offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to inquire whether any, and if any, what amendments are necessary to the constitution of the United States, to enable the government thereof to adopt such a system of military instruction and discipline for the militia, as to make it a safe and effectual national defence.

The house agreed, by a small majority, to consider the resolution—and it was, on motion of Mr. Yancey, laid on the table.

The Speaker laid before the house a letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting a statement of the goods, wares, and merchandise exported from the United States during the year ending the 30th of September last; which was ordered to lie on the table.

The Speaker also laid before the house a letter from the commissioner of the public buildings, enclosing an estimate of the sums wanting to complete the enclosing and graduating the capital square; which was read and referred to the committee on the public buildings.

On motion of Mr. Yancey, the committee of ways and means were instructed to inquire into the expediency of increasing the duty on foreign spirits.

The engrossed bill "concerning the navigation of the United States," was read the third time and passed.

The Speaker then proceeded to call over the orders of the day; when

Mr. Lewis moved that the house go into a committee on the bills to incorporate certain banking companies in this District.

Mr. Randolph entered into a wide discussion of the expediency of authorizing additional banks, as at present conducted, condemning the policy pursued by the government on this subject already, and against chartering other companies for the issue of paper, without probably a dollar of capital, &c.

After some conversation, the question on the indefinite postponement of the bills was taken and decided as follows:

YEAS—Messrs. Adams, Adgate, Alexander, Archer, Barbour, Bassett, Bateman, Boyles, Bennet, Betts, Boss, Brown, Bryan, Burwell, Calhoun, Cannon, Carr, Ms. Champion, Chappell, Cibley, Clayton, Clendenin, Condict, Cook, Crawford, Darlington, Desha, Edwards, Forney, Hahn, Hale, Hall, Hammond, Hardin, Heister, Hendricks, Hooks, Hopkinson, Ingham, Johnson Va. King, Langdon, Law, Little, Lyle, Wm. Maclay, Wm. P. Maclay, Marsh, Mason, Miller, Moore, Thos. M. Nelson, Parais, Pickens, Piper, Randolph, Reed, Roane, Root, Ross, Savage, Schenck, Smith, Penn. Smith, Va. Strong, Taul, Telfair, Williams, Wm. Wilson, Woodward—77

NAYS—Messrs. Atherton, Avery, Baer, Baker, Birdseye, Blount, Brooks, Cady, Caldwell, Comstock, Crocheron, Culpepper, Davenport, Forsyth, Goldsborough, Goodwyn, Harrison, Hawes, Herbert, Huger, Hungerford, Irving, N. Y. Jackson, Kerr, Va. Kilbourn, Lewis, Lovett, Lowndes, Lumpkin, Lyon, McCoy, McLean, Milner, Moffitt, Moseley, Jer. Nelson, Hugh Nelson, Newton, Peter, Pickering, Pitkin, Pleasants, Reynolds, Rice, Robertson, Ruggles, Sharp, Sheffield, Southard, Stearns, Stuart, Tallmadge, Taylor, N. Y. Taylor, S. C. Townsend, Ward, Ms. Wendover, Wilde, Wilkin, Willoughby, Thos. Wilson, Wright, Yancey, Yates—64

The following message was received from the President of the United States:

To the Senate and House of Representatives, of the United States:

The government of Great Britain, induced by the posture of the relations with the United States, which succeeded the conclusion of the late commercial convention, issued an order on the 17th day of August, 1815, discontinuing the discriminating duties, payable in British ports, on American vessels and their cargoes. It was not until the 22d of December following that a corresponding discontinuance of discriminating duties on British vessels and their cargoes, in American ports, took effect, under the authority vested in the executive, by the act of March, 1816. During the period between those two dates, there was, consequently, a failure of reciprocity or equality in the existing regulations of the two countries. I recommend to the consideration of Congress the expediency of paying to the British government the amount of the duties remitted, during the period in question, to the citizens of the United States; subject to a deduction of the amount of whatever discriminating duties may have commenced in British ports after the signature of that convention, and been collected previous to the 15th August, 1815.

JAMES MADISON.

February 3, 1817.

The message was referred to the committee of ways and means, and ordered to be printed;

And the House adjourned.

Tuesday, Feb. 4.—Mr. Johnson, of Kentucky, from the military committee, reported a bill respecting the ransom of captives in the late war: which was twice read and committed.

Mr. Johnson, from the same committee, made a report on the inquiry they were instructed to make, into the expediency of educating at the military academy at West Point, the sons of those officers and soldiers who have fallen in battle, while in the service of the United States. [The report states that the committee have considered the subject, and have instructed their chairman, when the bill for establishing additional military academies shall come up, to move an amendment thereto, embracing the object abovementioned.]

Mr. Thomas, from the committee on Indian affairs, reported a bill to regulate trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes, and to exclude foreigners from participating therein; which was twice read and committed.

On motion of Mr. Pope, the military committee

were instructed to inquire into the expediency of paying the expenses of the general staff of governor Edwards, of Illinois Territory, while in service in 1812.

On motion of Mr. Ormsby, the committee of commerce and manufactures were directed to inquire into the expediency of making Louisville, in Kentucky, a port of entry.

On motion of Mr. Taul, the committee on the post-office and post-roads, were directed to inquire into the expediency of discontinuing the post route from Danville, in Kentucky, Casey court-house, Pulaski court-house, Wayne court-house, Burksville, and Columbia, to Danville; and to establish in lieu thereof, a post route from Danville by Liberty and Somerset to Monticello, thence by Burksville to Glasgow, and to extend the route from Greensburg by Columbia to Burksville.

The bill from the Senate making an appropriation to enable the President of the United States to hold treaties with the Indian tribes, &c. the bill for the relief of William Smith; the bill providing for the division of certain quarter sections, in future sales of the public lands; the bill for the relief of William Haslet, were severally twice read, and referred to various committees.

Mr. Culpepper moved to postpone the intervening orders of the day, for the purpose of again taking up Mr. Pickens' propositions to amend the constitution, which were under discussion some weeks ago.

The House, however, refused to go into the consideration of the resolution—ayes 59, nays 73.

After refusing to take up several other orders—

The House, on motion of Mr. Calhoun, resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Mr. Smith, of Maryland, in the chair, on the bill to set apart and pledge as a permanent fund for internal improvement the bonus of the national bank and the United States shares of its dividends.

A motion made by Mr. Wright, to strike out the first section, (to destroy the bill) was negatived—ayes 61, nays 70—when the committee rose.

Wednesday, Feb. 5.—The Speaker laid before the House a letter from the comptroller of the treasury, transmitting a statement of balances remaining on the books of the treasury, which have been due more than three years, prior to the 30th of September last, and remained unsettled on that day: which was ordered to lie on the table.

The House took up the report of the committee of the whole, on the bill to set apart and pledge the bonus and United States dividends of the national bank, as a fund for internal improvements.

Mr. Pickering rose to offer an amendment to the amendments made by the committee: when

Mr. King intimated that he also wished to propose some amendments to the bill, and moved that it be laid, for the present, on the table.

The motion prevailed, and the bill was laid on the table accordingly.

The House then, on motion of Mr. Johnson, of Kentucky, went into committee of the whole, Mr. Bassett in the chair, on sundry bills connected with the military establishment.

The first taken up by the committee, was a bill concerning the invalids of the revolutionary war, and of the widows and children of the militia, and of the soldiers of the army during the late war. [Placing pensioners of the revolutionary war and of the Indian war previous to the treaty of Greenville, on the same footing; and for allowing five

years half pay to the widows or orphans of any officer or soldier of the militia, rangers, sea fensibles, and twelve or fifteen months volunteers, who shall have died within three months after returning home, of any disease contracted while in the military service, &c.

The committee having gone through the bill, proceeded to the consideration of the bill making further provision for military services during the late war.

This bill having been also gone through, and variously amended,

The committee, on motion of Mr. Johnson, took up the bill for the establishment of a national armory, [adjacent to the river Ohio or its branches, and appropriating 60,000 dollars for the object.]

Mr. Cannon moved to add after Ohio, the river Tennessee, and suggested several points on the waters of the Tennessee well adapted to the erection of water works for the establishment.

Mr. Jackson opposed the amendment as unnecessary, because the Tennessee being a branch of the Ohio, of course would be taken into consideration by the President in fixing the site, as well as the Monongahela, the Cumberland, &c.

The motion was negatived without a division.

Mr. Pickens moved to insert after the word Ohio, the Catawba, as affording good sites, abundance of iron, and every advantage for the establishment of a manufactory of arms.

After a few remarks by Mr. Johnson, adverse to the amendment,

The motion was negatived; and the bill being read through without amendment,

The committee took up the bill to repeal so much of the act of July, 1812, as authorizes additional pay and emoluments to brevet officers, and to allow additional rations to commanding officers of separate posts only in cases in which the officer shall be of or under the rank of colonel.

The committee rose and reported its proceedings to the House.

FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC SUMMARY.

FOREIGN.

In our last we published a conjecture as to the loss of the U. S. brig *Spark*. We find by a letter from Lieut. H. Henry of the navy, that the *Spark* was reported safe at Malaga by the last arrivals.

A letter from Scotland states, that the harvest had been gathered in, in a much better and more productive condition, than was anticipated. A decline in the price of grain has consequently followed this unexpected blessing. The manufactories in Scotland, and North of England, have raised the wages from 10 to 20 per cent.

Norfolk, Jan. 31.—A letter received in town by a commercial friend, dated Cadiz, 9th Nov. 1816, says—"O'Donnell is collecting an army of twenty thousand men—for Buenos Ayres."

Havana, Dec. 25.—A vessel has just arrived from Africa with upwards of 300 slaves, afflicted with the small-pox. The governor, in conformity with the request of the board of health, has taken some salutary measures to prevent the contagion from spreading, by sending the vessel into a harbor, at a distance from the city, and forbidding all communication with her.

The Havana Diary of 25th Dec. was received at Savannah on 24th Jan. by an arrival at St. Augustine. It contains the official account of the capture of Boquilla de Piedras by the royal army.

DOMESTIC.

The gazettes of a few days past have made mention of numerous agitations of the earth, which have all been called by the appalling name of *Earthquakes*. Two are reported to have been felt in Canada; two in Charleston, S. C. both on the 30th December, and one of thirty seconds continuance! One at Richmond, and three in Baltimore, on the 8th inst. one preceded by lightning! These agitations appear to have been confined to small limits. After a very dry season, succeeded by heavy rains, and after the rapid succession of warm and freezing weather, there will frequently be local tremblings of the ground, from the confinement of air in its cavities; but they seldom are attended with serious effects—should excite no undue alarm, and ought not to receive the name which appears peculiarly appropriate to those tremendous visitations of Heaven, which the annals of Italy and the West-Indies have recorded, but which—thanks to a good Providence—our country has heretofore been exempted from.—

Best. Cent.

Specie payments.—A letter, dated at Philadelphia, the 2d inst. states that "the United States Bank has agreed to discount two millions of dollars for this city, and to allow the banks that are indebted to the United States to hold the same by paying interest. New-York, Baltimore and Virginia, will also have a liberal discount."

At the conference held last week in Philadelphia between the deputation of directors from the principal state banks and the directors of the U. States bank, an arrangement was made and unanimously agreed to, to resume the payment of specie on the 20th of February inst. This information we have from an official source, and is entirely to be relied upon.—*Pat.*

The legislature of New-York have under consideration a recommendation of the governor to abolish all slavery in that State at a period not more remote than the 4th of July, 1827, and also "an act to prevent habitual drunkards from wasting their estates."

A resolution is before the legislature of Pennsylvania for abolishing the punishment of death in all cases.

A petition to the legislature of Maryland affirms that there are five hundred *tippling houses* constantly open in *Baltimore*.

The municipal government of Norfolk have ordained the erection of a monument, near Fort Harbour, to be consecrated to the memory of the defenders of their country.

Deaf and Dumb.—A school for the instruction of the deaf and dumb is about to be established in the city of New-York. In that metropolis alone 47 persons were found, from the age of 8 to 18, who were deprived of speech and hearing. The funds are expected to be ample, and the school to embrace all of this description of unfortunates, living within the State.

Lamach.—On the 1st inst. the steam-boat *Vesuvius*, which had been burnt to the water's edge on the night of the 14th July last, again entered the Mississippi amid the cheers of numerous spectators.—*N. Orleans, Jan. 3.*

The Stephen Decatur packet, which plied between Baltimore and Norfolk, was lost at Tangier Island on the 18th ult. having got clogged with ice.

There was a severe frost in W. Florida the 11th Nov. which, it was feared, would destroy the sugar cane crops in that country.